

# Who Was the Real Jesus?

David Pratt

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## Jesus as fiction

The story of Jesus as presented in the four gospels of the New Testament is essentially a piece of fiction. There are no authentic references to such a figure in the works of any historians of the early 1st century CE (common era). The pre-gospel writings of the early Christians also make no reference to the life and teachings of a recent historical Jesus. Paul, for instance, was supposedly Jesus' contemporary, yet he never claimed to have met him in the flesh or to have met anyone else who had done so; he encountered him only in visions, as a spiritual being. The Christian groups of the 1st century CE held extremely diverse theological views, and this would be hard to explain if they were the followers of a single, recent teacher. Remarkably, they showed no interest in the holy sites and relics associated with Jesus' alleged earthly career; it was not until the 4th century that pieces of the 'true cross' began to surface, and that the first shrine was set up on the supposed mount of Jesus' death.

It is only in the four canonical gospels and certain other New Testament writings that the now orthodox story of Jesus is to be found. The gospels, however, were largely written in the 2nd century, have suffered numerous alterations and additions, and contain significant contradictions and inconsistencies. Their shortcomings are recognized by Christian and non-Christian scholars alike. Some theologians are now prepared to question not only the virgin birth and miracles, but even the much more fundamental doctrine of the resurrection. Theology professor Burton Mack, for example, goes as far as to call the gospels' portrayal of Jesus 'fantastic', 'the result of a layered history of imaginative embellishments of a founder figure' [1]. But even the very existence of a great Christian founder figure living at the start of the 1st century is highly implausible, given the silence of contemporary historians and even 1st-century Christians [2].

H.P. Blavatsky stated that the story of Jesus was invented after the 1st century. Jesus, she says,

is a deified personification of the glorified type of the great Hierophants of the Temples, and his story, as told in the New Testament, is an allegory, assuredly containing profound esoteric truths, but still an allegory. . . . Every act of the Jesus of the New Testament, every word attributed to him, every event related of him during the three years of the mission he is said to have accomplished,

many different names in ancient pagan mystery religions: in Egypt he was Osiris, in Greece Dionysus, in Asia Minor Attis, in Syria Adonis, in Italy Bacchus, in Persia Mithras. All the major elements of the Jesus story, from the virgin birth to the crucifixion and resurrection, can be found in *earlier* stories of pagan godmen. As G. de Purucker puts it:

the 'Gospel' story is merely an idealized fiction, written by Christian mystics in imitation of esoteric mysteries of the 'Pagans,' showing the initiation trials and tests of the candidate for initiation; and it is not very well done, there being much error and many mistakes in the 'Gospels.' [4]

## A historical Jesus?

The fact that key elements of the gospel story of Jesus are clearly mythical does not automatically mean that the entire portrayal is fiction. Over the past two centuries scholars have produced many different reconstructions of the 'real Jesus'. He has been depicted, for example, as a priestly zealot fomenting popular unrest against the Roman occupation, an apocalyptic prophet, a progressive Pharisee, a Galilean healer and miracle-worker, and a Hellenistic sage. Commenting on the many 'historical Jesuses', Robert Price writes:

All tend to center on particular constellations of gospel elements interpreted in certain ways, leaving other data to the side as spurious . . . What one Jesus reconstruction leaves aside, the next takes up and makes its cornerstone. . . . Each sounds good until you hear the next one. [1]

The Jesus Seminar, an association of progressive biblical scholars based in California, was formed in the 1980s and has played an important role in exposing the unreliability of the early Christian record. Its members believe that Jesus was primarily a sage who taught that the kingdom of heaven is within. They dismiss the gospel stories of him working miracles, and regard him as too enlightened to have threatened his opponents with damnation on Judgement Day. In fact, they reject as inauthentic some three quarters of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the gospels. But their selective portrayal tells us more about their own preconceptions and preferences than about an historical Jesus [2].

Mark's Gospel, the shortest and simplest, is widely believed to have been the first of the four canonical gospels to be written. The authors of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke copied large chunks of it, but also appear to have been in possession of another document, now lost, known as 'Q' (standing for *Quelle*, a German word meaning 'source'), which apparently contained the sayings of Jesus. Q is thought to have been written in three stages: Q1 contains wisdom sayings, Q2 more sectarian, apocalyptic sayings, and only Q3 refers to a founder figure called Jesus. This legendary figure is depicted as a purely human teacher, which is how early Christians such as the Ebionites and Nazoreans regarded Jesus; there is no mention of Jesus being the son of God, or of his crucifixion and resurrection.

Some scholars, however, believe that even Q1 may be based on the life of an actual itinerant Galilean preacher of the 20s or 30s, who was one of the prototypes of the gospel Jesus [3]. Opponents of this view argue that the sayings represent ideas widely held in various brotherhoods and mystery schools long before Christianity was created. In

The Jewish historian Josephus mentions three characters who people thought were messiahs and who were crucified by the Romans: Yehuda of Galilee (6 CE), Theudas (44 CE), and Benjamin the Egyptian (60 CE). It is possible that the Jesus story is partly based on their lives [5].

G.A. Wells maintains that Paul regarded Jesus as a heavenly, preexistent figure who had come to earth perhaps one or two centuries before his own time. Alvar Ellegard has gone a step further and has suggested that the main prototype for Jesus was the Teacher of Righteousness mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls (discovered in the late 1940s and early 50s) [6]. Ellegard argues that this figure was the founder of the Judaic reform movement known as the Essenes, and died around 100 BCE (before common era). He was looked upon as a great prophet and also as a martyr, who had been harassed and eventually put to death by the Jewish priestly hierarchy. According to Ellegard, Paul and his colleagues were the first to refer to this figure as 'Jesus', and it was they who introduced the idea that he was the messiah or saviour. He acknowledges that the Teacher of the Scrolls differs in many ways from the Jesus of the gospels, but stresses that the latter is largely a fictional figure.

There is disagreement as to whether Paul and his fellow-believers saw Jesus as a man who had lived on earth at some more distant time in the past or whether they saw him entirely as a mythical figure, a spiritual being who lived and operated in the 'supernatural' world, like all the other saviour gods of the time. Although Paul makes it clear that he himself had never met an historical Jesus, there are a handful of passages in his writings that could be interpreted as referring to a previous earthly existence of Jesus. Earl Doherty, however, argues that these are better interpreted in line with Platonic thinking about counterpart realities in the higher spiritual world [7]. In his view, pre-gospel Christian records do not provide any evidence of a widespread tradition about a human founder who was a prophet, teacher, miracle-worker and interpreter of scripture -- in either the recent or distant past.

In a highly speculative reconstruction of the life of the Teacher of Righteousness (who may have been called Judah), Michael Wise argues that he was a priestly prophet, a member of the elite, and rose to preeminence around 105 BCE as a leader of the political coalition that supported King Alexander Jannaeus (who reigned from c. 103 to 76 BCE) [8]. Alexander was supported by the Sadducees and oppressed the Pharisees, but when his wife, Alexandra, became queen, she did an about-face and embraced the Pharisees. Judah, who came to regard himself as the messiah, defied the new regime, labelling it Satan's dominion. He was arrested, charged with false prophecy, and exiled around 74 BCE, and within a few years he had been killed. Wise does not specifically link the Teacher with the Essenes.

Robert Eisenman contends that the Dead Sea Scrolls have been dated a century too early, and that they should be seen as 1st-century CE works stemming from the community led by James the Just. According to this view, it is the latter who was called the Teacher of Righteousness. The Teacher is said to have been ambushed, betrayed and killed by a wicked priest, and this closely parallels the plot of Ananus the High Priest to trap and kill James [9]. If this theory is confirmed, it would rule out Ellegard's hypothesis that the Teacher of Righteousness was the historical Jesus and undermine Wise's attempted reconstruction of his life. A more important candidate for an historical Jesus is found in the Jewish Talmud.

The Talmud contains a number of passages that refer to a certain Jeshu (or Joshua) ben Pandera, who lived around 100 BCE [1]. Jeshu is said to have been the disciple of Joshua ben Perachiah, who was certainly a historical figure, being one of the most prominent rabbis of the time. During the persecution of the Pharisees by Alexander Jannaeus, which began around 94 BCE, Joshua ben Perachiah fled with Jeshu to Alexandria in Egypt, where Jeshu is said to have learned magic. Described as a learned man, Jeshu was expelled for heretical tendencies from the school over which Joshua presided. He became a religious teacher, had several disciples, and preached to ordinary people. He was accused of practising sorcery, deceiving Israel and estranging people from God. After being tried and convicted, he was stoned to death and his body was then hung up as a warning to others.

Some Jews still adhere to the 100 BCE date for Jesus and argue that many gospel stories are specific responses to the Talmudic picture of Jeshu ('Jesus' is the Latin form of 'Jeshu' or 'Yeshu') [2]. Christians, on the other hand, claim that the Talmud Jeshu is partly based on the 'real', gospel Jesus, and that the stories about Jeshu reflect the Jews' intense hostility towards the Christians [3]. Many writers who argue that the gospel Jesus is a fictional character also deny the historical reality of the Talmud Jeshu [4]. Theosophical writers such as H.P. Blavatsky and G. de Purucker, on the other hand, insist that there was a historical Jesus who lived around 100 BCE, on whom the gospel Jesus is partly based, and they give credence to the Talmudic tradition [5]. Blavatsky writes:

However cautious one ought to be in accepting anything about Jesus from Jewish sources, it must be confessed that in some things they seem to be more correct in their statements (whenever their direct interests in stating facts is not concerned) than our good but too jealous [Church] Fathers. [6]

The Talmud was compiled between the 2nd and 6th centuries CE from earlier traditions. In the middle ages, the scattered passages referring to Jeshu were worked up, together with other material, into a book, the *Toldoth Jeshu* (Life of Jesus). Whereas the Talmud is a fairly sober work, the *Toldoth Jeshu* is full of wild tales, which are clearly not intended to be regarded as historical. The statements made about Jesus in the Talmud and *Toldoth* are sometimes rather confused, and some were probably written after the gospel story emerged in order to ridicule Christian beliefs (e.g. the story about Jesus' mother being an adulteress and Jesus a bastard, and the story that Jesus' disciples stole his dead body and hid it).

The Talmud also speaks of a man named ben Stada ('strayed one'), who sometimes stands for Jesus, but one of the passages implies that he lived around 100 CE -- nearly 200 years after King Jannaeus' death. However, this should not be used as an excuse to reject the whole rabbinical tradition about Jesus as unhistorical and unreliable, especially since ben Stada appears originally to have been a separate character who was later confused with Jeshu [7]. G.R.S. Mead shows that the 100 BCE date is part of the oldest deposit of the Talmud and predates the stories containing the later date, which were developed by the Lydda (or Lud) school of rabbis for polemical purposes [8].

The early Christians were well aware of the Jewish stories about Jesus. The pagan philosopher Celsus, who was famous for his arguments against Christianity, referred to the Jewish tradition current in his own day (c. 170 CE) that Jesus went to Egypt where he learned magic and later returned home and started claiming he was a god. Jesus' mother,

in his book against Celsus. At the end of the 2nd century, the fiery church father Tertullian, in a diatribe against the Jews, indicated that he was aware of several elements of the

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/dp5/jesus.htm>

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but included in the *Toldoth Jeshu*, which was not written down until 6 centuries later. In the 4th century the Christian saint Epiphanius gave a Christian genealogy in which Panthera is mentioned as the grandfather of Jesus. He even states that Jesus lived in the time of King Jannaeus, but then goes on to say that Jesus was born in 2 BCE, some 70 years after Jannaeus' death [10]! Epiphanius was trying to dispose of the Jewish tradition about Jesus by incorporating elements of it into his own (clearly fictional) account, apparently unconcerned by the blatant incongruity to which this gave rise.

According to Matthew's Gospel, Joseph and Mary had to flee with the baby Jesus to Egypt because King Herod had ordered all infant boys born in Bethlehem to be killed. As already mentioned, the Talmud says that ben Perachiah fled to Egypt with Jeshu to escape being killed by King Jannaeus. In contrast to the Christian story of the 'slaughter of the innocents' under Herod, for which there is no historical evidence whatsoever, the persecution of the Pharisees by Alexander Jannaeus is a historical fact [11]. Jannaeus (supported by the Sadducees) overcame the Pharisees around 88 BCE after six years of fighting. He allegedly crucified 800 of them and had the throats of their wives and children cut in front of them; another 8000 rabbis fled Judea. The 'slaughter of the innocents' may be partly based on this fact (initiates were sometimes called 'innocents' or 'infants'). However, it should be noted that the theme of a divine or semi-divine child who is feared by an evil king is very common in pagan mythology.

According to the gospels, Jesus was crucified. However, Paul and Peter, who were writing *before* the gospels were composed, say he was 'hanged on a tree' (Galatians 3:13; Acts 5:30, 10:39). The Talmud Jesus is said to have been stoned and hanged on a tree (in accordance with Jewish law). Jesus' crucifixion is also, of course, symbolical. Christ represents both the spiritual sun (whose emblem is the physical sun) and the spiritual self in each individual. The cross represents the intersection of the ecliptic and the celestial equator, and also the interdependence of spirit (the vertical bar) and matter (the horizontal). Just as the sun is 'reborn' at the vernal equinox, when it crosses the celestial equator and begins its northward journey along the ecliptic, so the aim of initiation is to end the 'crucifixion' of the higher self in the world of matter by bringing about a second or spiritual birth, in which the lower nature is transmuted and united with the higher. During the trials of initiation the candidate often lay on a cruciform couch.

The theme of a divine or semi-divine being who is sacrificed against a tree, pole or cross and then resurrected is frequently found in pagan mythology. For instance, at the vernal equinox, pagans in northern Israel would celebrate the death and resurrection of the virgin-born Tammuz-Osiris. In Asia Minor (where the earliest Christian churches were established) a similar celebration was held for the virgin-born Attis, who was shown as dying against a tree, being buried in a cave and then being resurrected on the third day [12].

## Jesus the Nazar

Pandera is also called Jeshu ha-Notzri (Jesus the Nazar). The Greek equivalent of *notzri* is *nazoraaios* (or *nazaraaios/naziraios*). The stem of this word means 'to keep oneself separate' -- an indication of the ascetic nature of this sect. The early Christians conjectured that *nazoraaios* (variously rendered Nazar/Nazarite, Nazorean or Nazarene) meant a person from Nazareth and so it was assumed that Jesus lived in Nazareth. However, the original Hebrew for Nazareth is *Natzrat* and a person from Nazareth is a *Natzrati*. The expression 'Jesus of Nazareth' is therefore a mistranslation of 'Jeshu ha-Notzri'.

At the time of the emergence of Christianity, the Middle East was the scene of great religious diversity, as has been confirmed by the Nag Hammadi writings and Dead Sea Scrolls. Many of the various sects -- e.g. Essenes, Therapeutae (lit. 'healers'), Nazars, Nabatheans, Ebionites and Gnostics -- were closely interrelated and often difficult to tell apart. As H.P. Blavatsky says, they 'were all, with very slight differences, followers of the ancient theurgic mysteries' [2]. Several scholars have pointed to similarities between eastern religious traditions (especially Buddhism and Brahmanism) and the ideas of the Essenes, Nazars and Gnostics. Trade routes between the Greco-Roman world and the Far East were opening up at the time Gnosticism flourished (80-200 CE), Buddhists were in contact with gnostic Christians in southern India, and for generations Buddhist missionaries had been proselytizing in Alexandria and elsewhere in the Middle East [3].

According to Blavatsky, the Essenes were 'the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka' (mid-3rd century BCE) [4]. She states that although Jesus was a pupil of the Essenes, he was not a strict Essene as he disagreed with his early teachers on several questions of formal observance.

[T]he Nazarene Reformer, after having received his education in their [the Essenes'] dwellings in the desert, and been duly initiated into the Mysteries, preferred the free and independent life of a wandering *Nazaria*, and so separated or *inazarenized* himself from them, thus becoming a travelling Therapeute, a Nazaria, a healer. [5]

She describes the Nazars as 'a class of Chaldean initiates' and 'kabalistic gnostics' [6]. Regarding Jesus' mission, she writes:

The motive of Jesus was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha, to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics . . .

In his immense and unselfish love for humanity, he considers it unjust to deprive the many of the results of the knowledge acquired by the few. This result he accordingly preaches -- the unity of a spiritual God, whose temple is within each of us, and in whom we live as He lives in us -- in spirit. [7]

The Mandeans asserted that Jesus was Nebu, the false messiah, and the destroyer of the old orthodox religion, while other opponents said he was the founder of a new sect of Nazars. The Hebrew word *naba* means 'to speak by inspiration', and Nebo is the god of wisdom and also the planet Mercury. The Hindus call this planet Budha ('wise man'), and it is closely connected with the Buddha ('awakened one'). Similarly, the Talmudists hold that Jesus was inspired by the genius or regent of Mercury [8]. According to the modern theosophical tradition, there is an intimate link between Jesus and Buddha, connected with Jesus' status as an avatara.

The term 'avatara' signifies the 'descent' of a divine being who overshadows and works through a human vehicle. Mahatma KH stated that the man Jeshu was 'a mortal like any of us, an adept more by his inherent purity and ignorance of real Evil, than by what he had learned with his initiated Rabbis and the already (at that period) fast degenerating Egyptian Hierophants and priests' [1]. Jesus was *chrestos* (good and holy), and became *christos* ('anointed', i.e. glorified) only when the celestial power began to work through him. As Blavatsky explains:

Western Theosophists accept the *Christos* as did the Gnostics of the centuries which preceded Christianity, as do the Vedantins their Krishna: they distinguish the corporeal man from the divine Principle which, in the case of the Avatara, animates him. [2]

To make a complete avatara, a *third* element is necessary: the physical-astral body and the spiritual-divine entity must be linked by a psychological apparatus, which is provided by a master of wisdom with the status of a buddha. Blavatsky and Purucker indicate that in the case of Jesus, it was the adept known in his last incarnation as Gautama Buddha who provided this link [3]. When the Buddha achieved enlightenment, his spiritual self is said to have entered the state of nirvana, while his intermediate self, the bodhisattva, remained after his death in the earth's ethereal atmosphere as a nirmanakaya so that it could continue to help on human evolution [4].

Purucker explains that avatars are humans of extraordinary spiritual and intellectual powers embodying a divine ray, who have no human karma because they are not the reincarnations of an ordinary human soul evolving on this earth. They are created by an act of white magic at cyclical points in human history for the purpose of introducing the spiritual influence of a divine being into human affairs [5]. The chosen child, even before it is born, is overshadowed by the soul of the Buddha, who watches over and strengthens the body concerned until it can receive the fuller incarnation of the Buddha's spiritual and intellectual powers. Somewhat later, usually when the borrowed body has reached adulthood, the soul of the Buddha rises through the ether and links itself with the waiting divinity, and from that instant, which usually takes place during initiation at the time of the winter solstice, the avatara exists as a complete entity and goes about its work [6]. Purucker writes:

An avatara usually happens in our world when a divinity is passing through initiation, and a human being provides the vehicle to enable it to descend into what is an underworld to the divine spheres. When a human being undergoes a corresponding initiation, the man descends into the underworld where a denizen thereof cooperates to lend its thinking conscious vehicle to allow the human monad to manifest and work there. [7]

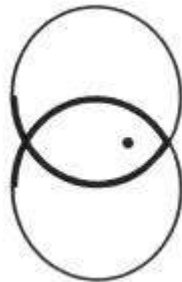
The gospel Jesus appears to be a patchwork character, partly mythical and partly based on a number of historical characters, including the Talmud Jeshu. As for the avatara Jesus mentioned in the theosophical tradition, Purucker points out that there is no exoteric proof that such a figure did live and teach [8]. He is said to have been born around 107 BCE [9], and Blavatsky quotes an obscure passage from a 'secret work', which could be interpreted to mean that he died in his 33rd year (i.e. in 75-74 BCE) [10].\*

\*Shankaracharya, the great Vedantic teacher of India, is also said to have been overshadowed by the Buddha. Born in 510 BCE, he chose to die in his 33rd year. A commentary explains: 'At whatever age one puts off his outward body by free will, at that age will he be

*Jeshu* indicates that Jeshu outlived Jannaeus, who died between 79 and 76 BCE. He was succeeded by his wife, Salome, who reigned for some nine years and, unlike her husband, was favourable to the Pharisees. It may have been only after Jannaeus' death that both Joshua ben Perachiah and Jeshu returned to Judea [12].

The New Testament does not indicate how old Jesus was when he died, though he is said to have begun his ministry at the age of 30. Some of the early Christians gave the time of his ministry as one year. The church father Irenaeus dismissed this and stated that Jesus' ministry lasted 20 years. The accepted opinion among Christians today is that his mission lasted 3 years, and that he was crucified in his 33rd year [13].

In theosophical literature, Jesus is said to have been the avatara for the Piscean Age, the age which is now closing as we enter the Aquarian Age [14]. Significantly, the Jesus story contains a great deal of fish imagery. The apostles were known as 'fishers of men'. The early Christians called themselves 'little fishes', and used the Greek word *ichthys* ('fish') as a code word for Jesus, as it was seen as an acronym for 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour'. In John's Gospel, Jesus miraculously helps his disciples land a large catch of 153 fish. 153 is a sacred number associated with the *vesica piscis* or 'vessel of the fish', an ancient Pythagorean symbol used by early Christians to represent their faith [15].



**Figure.** Two circles, symbolizing spirit and matter, are brought together in a sacred marriage. When the circumference of one touches the centre of the other they generate the fish shape known as the *vesica piscis*. The ratio of length to height of this shape is 265:153, and is known as the 'measure of the fish'. It is a powerful mathematical tool, being the nearest whole number approximation of the square root of three and the controlling ratio of the equilateral triangle.

Purucker says that Jesus 'came at a time of a downwards-running cycle in order to sow some seeds at least of spiritual light, preceding a time which was going to be spiritually dark'. His mission quickly proved to be a failure, because although the cyclic time for an avatara had come, everything was working against the spiritual forces for which he opened the way, and within less than a hundred years the teachings that he had left behind had degenerated [16]. For instance, the doctrines of reincarnation and karma were replaced by the irrational and unjust dogma that belief in Jesus is sufficient to absolve us of all our sins and secure us an eternity of heavenly bliss, while unbelievers will suffer eternal torment in hell.

Pagan Mysteries -- that within each one of us is the one Soul of the Universe, the Logos, the Universal Daemon, the Mind of God' [17]. The purpose of our evolutionary pilgrimage is to bring this inner christ or buddha nature to full expression over the course of numberless lives. As Blavatsky puts it:

Christ -- the true esoteric SAVIOUR -- *is no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the 'sepulchre' of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own *inner* sanctuary, he *has the risen Christ in him*. The 'Son of Man' is no child of the bond-woman -- *flesh*, but verily of the free-woman -- *Spirit*, the child of man's own deeds, and the fruit of his own spiritual labour. [18]

Blavatsky relates that she was once in a large cave-temple in the Himalayas with her Tibetan teacher, Morya. There were many statues of adepts and, pointing to one of them, her teacher said: 'This is he whom you call Jesus. We count him to be one of the greatest among us' [19]. The importance of Jesus is highlighted in the following passage:

all the civilized portion of the Pagans who knew of Jesus honored him as a philosopher, an *adept* whom they placed on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius. . . . As an incarnated God there is no single record of him on this earth capable of withstanding the critical examination of science; as one of the greatest reformers, an inveterate enemy of every theological dogmatism, a persecutor of bigotry, a teacher of one of the most sublime codes of ethics, Jesus is one of the grandest and most clearly-defined figures on the panorama of human history. His age may, with every day, be receding farther and farther back into the gloomy and hazy mists of the past; and his theology -- based on human fancy and supported by untenable dogmas may, nay, must with every day lose more of its unmerited prestige; alone the grand figure of the philosopher and moral reformer instead of growing paler will become with every century more pronounced and more clearly defined. It will reign supreme and universal only on that day when the whole of humanity recognizes but one father -- the UNKNOWN ONE above -- and one brother -- the whole of mankind below. [20]

## References

### Jesus as fiction

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[5] Hayyim ben Yehoshua, 'Refuting missionaries', <http://mama.indstate.edu/users/nizrael/jesusrefutation.html>.

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[6] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:202.

[7] *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, pp. 344-7; *Related Strangers*, p. 186; 'Refuting missionaries'.

[8] *Did Jesus Live 100 BC?*, pp. 414-9.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 127-33, 244, 281-3.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 388-412; *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 4:361fn, 8:382fn.

[11] *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?*, pp. 138-9; Acharya S, *The Christ Conspiracy: The greatest story ever sold*, Kempton, IL: Adventures Unlimited, 1999, p. 326 ([www.truthbeknown.com](http://www.truthbeknown.com)); H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1977, 2:504fn.

[12] 'Refuting missionaries'.

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[1] 'Refuting missionaries'.

[2] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:143.

[3] Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, New York: Vintage, 1981, pp. xx-xxi; *The Christ Conspiracy*, pp. 110-1, 322-3; Acharya S, *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ unveiled*, Kempton, IL: Adventures Unlimited, 2004, pp. 319-31.

[4] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:132, 42, 491; *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 9:137.

[5] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:144.

[6] *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 14:123, 150.

[7] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:133, 561.

[8] *Ibid.*, 2:132; *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 14:395.

### Jesus as avatara

[1] A.T. Barker (comp.), *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 2nd ed., 1975, p. 344.

- [4] *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 14:388-99; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, pp. 521-8.
- [5] *The Esoteric Tradition*, pp. 990-4; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, pp. 484-6.
- [6] *Dialogues of G. de Purucker*, 2:314; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, pp. 495-6.
- [7] *Ibid.*, p. 499.
- [8] *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 64.
- [9] Letter from H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge, 23 Feb. 1887; *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 427.
- [10] *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 14:404-5.
- [11] *Ibid.*, 14:405.
- [12] *Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?*, pp. 140-1, 188, 199-201.
- [13] *Word Wisdom in the Esoteric Tradition*, pp. 131-2.
- [14] *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 1058fn; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, p. 680.
- [15] David Fideler, *Jesus Christ, Sun of God: Ancient cosmology and early Christian symbolism*, Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1993, pp. 161-2; *The Jesus Mysteries*, pp. 48-9.
- [16] *Dialogues of G. de Purucker*, 2:213-5, 217-8; *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, pp. 485-7.
- [17] *The Jesus Mysteries*, p. 205.
- [18] *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 8:173.
- [19] *Ibid.*, 8:402.
- [20] *Isis Unveiled*, 2:150-1.

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